



Nursery Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125500
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293282
Inspection date 23 January 2007
Reporting inspector Alison Grainger

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ansley Common
School category	Community		Nuneaton
Age range of pupils	3-11		CV10 0PY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	024 76392318
Number on roll (school)	135	Fax number	024 7639 2318
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Catriona Ritchie
		Headteacher	Valerie Squires
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in a former mining area on the north-western outskirts of Nuneaton. Most pupils are White British. No pupils from minority ethnic families are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Taking the intake as a whole, children's skills are below the level expected on entry to the Nursery.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' progress and standards in writing and in the monitoring and evaluation of provision. The overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below average. Although pupils make satisfactory gains in some important aspects of their schoolwork, including reading and mathematics, their progress is poor in writing. Pupils' results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2006 were slightly below the national average in mathematics and science. The results in English were exceptionally low because of weaknesses in pupils' writing. Weaknesses in the range of opportunities for writing are the main reason for pupils' low standards in this area. The curriculum is inadequate and does not support pupils well enough in gaining confidence and competence as writers. Although the provision in the Nursery and Reception Year gives children a satisfactory start overall, there are missed opportunities to move them on in their early writing. Another factor contributing to pupils' underachievement is inadequate monitoring and evaluation. The school has known that pupils' writing is a main area for development and has taken some steps to try to improve it. However, it has not analysed carefully enough how the quality of provision contributes to the outcomes for pupils. As a result, it has not identified the extent to which the curriculum requires improvement in order to achieve the necessary improvements. Despite weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation of provision, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school knows that improvement is needed. The headteacher, all members of staff and governors are determined that pupils should do well. Some important improvements have been made since the last inspection. Pupils' behaviour is better and is now good. Pupils are reaching higher standards now in mathematics. These developments, and the commitment of everyone to making the necessary changes, show that the school has satisfactory capacity to move forward. There are some secure foundations on which the school can build. These include satisfactory teaching, care, guidance and support. Attention to pupils' personal welfare is good. Pupils appreciate the way in which they are looked after. Their personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Parents are pleased with the school and keen to support it. A good range of clubs and visits contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school. However, not enough is done to ensure that pupils have clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress and the standards they attain in writing.
- Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of provision focuses sharply on the outcomes for pupils and leads to the right actions for improvement.
- Provide all pupils with clear guidance to help them to improve their performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are below average and achievement is inadequate. Children make a satisfactory start in the Nursery and Reception Year. However, not all are on course to reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception Year. Progress at this early stage is slower in writing than in other areas. As pupils move up through Years 1 to 6, satisfactory gains are made in mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, standards are slightly below average in these subjects. The mathematics results improved in 2006 as a result of action to develop pupils' skills in problem-solving. English results at the end of Year 6 have been exceptionally low in recent years, reflecting significant weaknesses in pupils' writing. Whilst standards in all subjects have been below average in the end of Year 2 assessments, there has been a downward trend in the writing results over the last two years. Progress in writing is poor in Years 1 to 6, although it is satisfactory in reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Children make steady gains in their personal, social and emotional development in the Nursery and Reception Year. They enter their classrooms happily and confidently at the start of the school day. They are starting to show independence, for example as they help to plan activities. Pupils of all ages form positive relationships with each other and with adults. They work well together, such as when discussing their thoughts on a story in a Year 4 English lesson. They like their teachers and appreciate the many activities additional to daily lessons. However, some older ones 'switch off' during lessons if activities do not interest them. Pupils have the expected understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. Their good behaviour helps to make the school a safe place. Through involvement in the School Council and by carrying out responsibilities, pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community. Although spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, pupils' awareness of modern multi-ethnic society is underdeveloped. Weaknesses in the acquisition of important writing skills mean that pupils are not well enough prepared for their future lives and the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Satisfactory teaching ensures that pupils make adequate progress in reading, mathematics and science. Lessons are normally well organised. The purpose of the lesson is clear and pupils are told the reason for the activities. As a result, pupils usually settle quickly to tasks. Teachers successfully match activities to pupils' differing needs in mathematics. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher kept a close eye on how

well pupils were progressing with a variety of tasks related to money and shopping. She supported and challenged where necessary, so moving learning on. In other subjects, activities are not always closely enough matched to all pupils' needs. Instead, they are set at much the same level for all ability groups and this is not always appropriate. This is a particular weakness in the teaching of writing. The result is that the most capable pupils are not pushed on and those with learning difficulties sometimes struggle. In lessons in which teaching assistants are present, they are well deployed to support groups and individuals.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum is inadequate in meeting pupils' needs because the learning opportunities fail to promote sufficient progress in writing. Too few stimulating and challenging opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length in English and in other subjects. Pupils' enthusiasm for creative work is not harnessed, for example through writing in role in history. As a result, there are also missed opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world through the process of writing and reflecting. In the Nursery and the Reception Year, role-play activities are not used adequately to help children to gain the expected confidence and skills in early writing. The range of learning opportunities in the Nursery and Reception Year promotes satisfactory learning in other areas. All the required subjects are covered in Years 1 to 6. A good range of additional activities, such as clubs, visits and visitors to school enrich daily lessons and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils and parents appreciate the care for pupils' personal welfare. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils feel valued. A significant improvement since the last inspection is the good personal support now provided for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Sensitive attention is given to the needs of others with learning difficulties or disabilities. Secure arrangements are in place for ensuring pupils' safety. Much is being done to increase pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles, particularly the importance of diet and exercise. Academic guidance is weak. Pupils are not given clear enough advice on what they are already doing well and what they need to do next to improve. They do not, for example, have sharp and focused individual or group targets for writing. Marking is too variable in quality and does not move learning on well enough. There are, however, some instances of good marking in Years 1, 3 and 4.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Good teamwork ensures effective care for pupils' personal welfare. Teamwork has also led to improvements in mathematics teaching where there has been a whole-school

focus on developing pupils' problem-solving skills. There is no doubt that all staff have pupils' best interests at heart and want the school to improve. The headteacher and other senior leaders provide an adequately clear educational direction. Work has already started to improve the tracking of pupils' academic progress. The school welcomes external advice and support. The school has recognised writing as a main area for improvement. However, weak monitoring and evaluation of provision have resulted in slow progress in improving pupils' performance in this area. The school has not looked closely enough at how its provision affects the outcomes for pupils. Hence, it has not identified the weaknesses in the curriculum that need to be rectified. It has also seen its provision as being more effective than it is because aspects of selfevaluation are inaccurate. Governors are committed to the school and fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. The new chair of governors recognises that to help drive the school forward, governors need to provide more critical challenge as well as support.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your school. The Year 6 pupils were particularly helpful in telling us what you think about the school. We found that there are some good things about your school and also some big areas that could be better. We agree with you that the adults look after you well. They also make sure that you have many interesting activities additional to your lessons. Thank you for sharing your club work with us. You behave well and this helps to make the school a safe place. We saw that you get on well with each other and with the adults. You are starting to know how important it is to look after your health. You told us that you have been learning about healthy lifestyles, such as how to have a balanced diet. We found that you are making satisfactory progress in some important areas, such as mathematics and reading. We have asked the school to do more to help you with writing where we think you should make more progress. We would like the teachers to help you to enjoy writing more and to feel more confident about it. To do this, they will be giving you more interesting opportunities to write not only in literacy lessons but also in other subjects. At the moment, you do not have enough good opportunities for writing. We have asked the teachers to help you by giving you more information about what you already do well and what you can do better. By giving you clear areas to work on, the teachers will help you to take more responsibility for your learning. All the adults in school will be looking more closely at how well they help you to make progress. By doing this, they can build on what works well and put right the bits that don't work so well. All the adults are keen to improve your school. At the moment it isn't doing as well as it should be. Other inspectors will visit to see how the school is improving. You can help by working hard and always doing your best. Keep up the good behaviour. Thank you once again for your help and for being so welcoming.